Conversion of metre-gauge rail line into broad-gauge from Secunderabad via Kurnool to Gutty

925. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the conversion of metre-gauge into broad-gauge from Secunderabad via Kurnool to Gutty has started; and

(b) if not, when it is likely to start?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Surveys to determine financial implications for a parallel BG line between Secunderabad and Guntakal have been taken up. No action can be taken till the surveys are completed and reports examined.

Backlog of construction of National Highways

926. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the back-log construction of National Highways and bridges as at present and as 3 years ago State and Union Territories-wise;

(b) the extent to which it was reduced during each of the last 3 years; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to expedite elimination of the backlog and with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) to (c) Development of National Highways is a continuing process and depends upon the availability of resources. Deficiencies on National Highways are identified Scheme-wise. Deficiencies existing as on 1-4-85 and the extent to which they have been removed up to 31-3-88 are given in the statement attached. [*See* Appendix CXLVI, Annexure No. 31.]

Operation Black Board

927. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) when was the "Operation Black Board" launched;

(b) the amount of funds released so far to each State and Union Territory, State and Union Territory-wise;

(c) what is the substance of the quarterly progress reports about scheme implementation and utilisation of funds, State and Union Territory-wise; and

(d) the number of Blocks|Municipal areas which were to be covered and those which have been actually covered under the scheme in 1987-88, State and Union Territory-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L. P. SHAHI): (a) to (d) The scheme of Operation Blackboard was launched in 1987-88. All primary schools in 20 per cent blocks|municipal areas in the country were proposed to be covered in 1987-88. A statement indicating coverage of Blocks|Municipal areas and amounts released, State and Union Territory-wise is attached. (*See* below). Quarterly progress reports are awaited from the States|U.Ts.